

Message Text

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ACTION EA-14

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SUBJECT NATIONAL ASSEMBLY: INTERPARTY NEGOTIATIONS

REF SEOUL 7481

1. RANKING DRP, NDP, YUJONG-HOE, AND INDEPENDENT REPRESENTATIVES MET NOVEMBER 13 FOR SECOND DAY WITH SPEAKER CHONG IL-KWON IN ATTEMPT RESOLVE IMPASSE OVER NDP DEMAND FOR CABINET RESIGNATIONS OVER KIM TAE-CHUNG CASE AND CONSIDERATION OF 17 NDP BILLS.

2. SINCE NOVEMBER 7 SUBMISSION OF RESIGNATION BILL (REFTEL) ASSEMBLY HAS BEEN AT STANDSTILL; LEGISLATION-JUDICIARY COMMITTEE, TO WHICH BILL REFERRED BY SPEAKER, FAILED TO RULE ON BILL'S LEGALITY DURING INITIAL MEETINGS NOVEMBER 7-9. SINCE THEN COMMITTEE HAS SUSPENDED MEETINGS AWAITING OUTCOME OF POLITICAL NEGOTIATIONS. IN PRO FORMA FASHION NDP HAS THREATENED TO DEMAND RESIGNATION OF SPEAKER CHONG FOR SUBMITTING BILL TO COMMITTEE.

3. UNDER THREAT OF NDP BOYCOTT, ASSEMBLY STANDING COMMITTEES HAVE NOT RESUMED BUDGET DELIBERATIONS FOLLOWING NOVEMBER 5-6 SPECIAL PLENARY SESSION.

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WEEKEND OF NOVEMBER 10-11 PRODUCED BEHIND THE SCENES INTERPARTY NEGOTIATIONS LEADING TO

FORMAL MEETINGS, WITH GOVERNMENT SIDE AND NDP TRYING TO WORK OUT COMPROMISE.

4. NOVEMBER 13 PRESS REPORTS THAT MAJOR OBSTACLE IS DRP PROPOSAL THAT ACTION ON NDP DEMANDS BE POSTPONED UNTIL MID-DECEMBER, AFTER UN AND KOREA-JAPAN MINISTERS' MEETING, AND THAT BUDGET DELIBERATIONS PROCEED IMMEDIATELY. FOR THEIR PART, NDP MEMBERS HAVE BEEN THREATENING BOYCOTT OF ASSEMBLY PROCEEDINGS IF SOME GESTURE OF COMPROMISE IS NOT MADE TO THEIR POSITION.

5. NDP IS MEETING AFTERNOON NOVEMBER 13 TO PLAN FUTURE COURSE OF ACTION IF INTERPARTY NEGOTIATIONS FAILS TO REACH AGREEMENT. DNP SOURCE REPORTED TO EMBASSY OFFICER THAT PARTY WOULD HAVE TO DECIDE SOON WHETHER TO ACCEPT VAGUE GOVERNMENT PROMISE OF FUTURE ACTION OR INSIST ON SOME CONCRETE CONCESSIONS NOW.

6. COMMENT: IN SEPARATE CONVERSATIONS NDP PRESIDENT YU CHIN-SAN AND VICE SPEAKER YI CHOL-SUNG HAVE BOTH STATED THAT THE NDP IS NOT SEEKING A CONFRONTATION WITH THE GOVERNMENT AT THIS TIME. IN VIEW OF THE PRESENT SITUATION AND THE SETTLEMENT WITH GOJ OF THE KIM TAE-CHUNG CASE, HOWEVER, THEY BELIEVE GOVERNMENT MUST GIVE SOME EXPLANATION TO PUBLIC AND OFFER SOME CONCESSIONS TO THE OPPOSITION; IF THIS IS NOT DONE NDP LEADERS INDICATE THE PARTY WILL BE FORCED TO TAKE A STRONGER STAND.
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